

Assessing Proposals for Interagency Reorganization

**A Monograph
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AY 04-05

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 074-0188	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Monograph	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Assessing Proposals for Interagency Reorganization			5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
6. AUTHOR(S) Major Craig J. Alia				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College School of Advanced Military Studies 250 Gibbon Ave. Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027			10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES				
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.				12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE A
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 Words) <p>US military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan caused the U.S. Government to reassess its interagency capabilities. In the wake of these conflicts, Congress held hearings in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the interagency process and evaluate different remedies. Numerous organizations and national security experts testified and presented their studies analyzing the interagency process and its shortcomings. Using the body of evidence presented to them, Senators Lugar and Biden made recommendations for revamping the interagency process. These studies presented compelling cases for change however, their recommendations failed to consider some significant factors.</p> <p>Much of the research focused on developing a new organizational structure without fully understanding the environment in which these organizations operate. Additionally, the studies failed to consider organizational theory and its application to the interagency process. Instead, the recommendations focused on accountability and efficiency but failed to consider information management and coordination among and between agencies. In order to account for the numerous factors impacting interagency coordination a detailed examination of the congressional requirements, "think tank" recommendations, the environment, and organizational theory were required.</p>				
14. SUBJECT TERMS Interagency, Organizational Theory,				15. NUMBER OF PAGES 42
				16. PRICE CODE
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT U	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE U	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT U	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT none	

SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES
MONOGRAPH APPROVAL

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Title of Monograph: Assessing Proposals for Interagency
Reorganization

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Abstract

Assessing Proposals for Interagency Reorganization by Major Craig J. Alia, US Army, 42 pages.

US military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan caused the U.S. Government to reassess its interagency capabilities. In the wake of these conflicts, Congress held hearings in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the interagency process and evaluate different remedies. Numerous organizations and national security experts testified and presented their studies analyzing the interagency process and its shortcomings. Using the body of evidence presented to them, Senators Lugar and Biden made recommendations for revamping the interagency process. These studies presented compelling cases for change however, their recommendations failed to consider some significant factors.

Much of the research focused on developing a new organizational structure without fully understanding the environment in which these organizations operate. Additionally, the studies failed to consider organizational theory and its application to the interagency process. Instead, the recommendations focused on accountability and efficiency but failed to consider information management and coordination among and between agencies. In order to account for the numerous factors impacting interagency coordination a detailed examination of the congressional requirements, “think tank” recommendations, the environment, and organizational theory were required.

Two studies provide different approaches to organizational design. Beyond Goldwater-Nichols by the Center for Strategic and International Studies approached interagency reorganization using a traditional 20th century organizational design. Protecting America’s Freedom in the Information Age by the Markle Foundation looked at interagency organization using a postmodern organizational design. After assessing the two studies using congressional requirements, the environment, and organizational theory it became apparent that neither the traditional 20th century organizational structure represented by the CSIS study or the postmodern organizational structure represented by the Markle study fully addressed all the various requirements. The analysis concluded that a hybrid of the two studies would best attend to the complex problem of interagency coordination.

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Introduction

“Complex U.S. contingency operations over the last decade, from Somalia to Iraq, have demonstrated the necessity for a unity of effort not only from the armed forces but also from across the U.S. government.” CSIS Study (page 9)

Interagency coordination is a problem that has historically impeded the United States government’s ability to effectively marshal and integrate its full capabilities in times of war and peace. This inability to coordinate actions and to share information contributed to the terrorist attacks on 9-11 and impeded efforts in the conflicts that followed those attacks. In fact, poor interagency planning for reconstruction operations in Iraq cost the United States’ government billions of dollars, international credibility, and most importantly caused an unnecessary loss of US, coalition, and Iraqi lives. The absence of effective interagency planning, coordination, and integration may have prevented the coalition from exploiting a limited window of opportunity to pacify a conquered country and prevent an insurgency that to date has cost the US and its allies over 1,000 dead soldiers.¹ The examination of these operational breakdowns revealed “the U.S. government as a whole lacks established procedures for developing integrated strategies and plans.”² Members of Congress and government professionals have observed the difficulties encountered during the “post conflict” operations in both Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom and have concluded that the national security organization created by the Defense Act of 1947 must be revised to address the current needs for effective interagency action.

¹ United States General Accounting Office Report to Congressional Committees. *Rebuilding Iraq: Resource, Security, Governance, Essential Services, and Oversight Issues*. Washington, DC: United States Government Accounting Office, 28 June 2004, 2-5, 37-39.

² Clark A. Murdock, et al., “Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era.” Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 2004, 61; available from <http://www.csis.org/isp/gn/>.

The “accepted wisdom” of government reform is that reorganization equates to creating another agency.³ This approach is supported by a significant number of research organizations whose recommendations echo the conventional sentiment. However, there are other studies that suggest that emerging theories and technologies can be applied to the problem and provide an alternative solution. These emerging theories present practical problems in that they have never been successfully applied. Using an untried organizational concept to improve interagency planning presents a significant challenge to policy makers because of the value they place on interagency coordination and effectiveness.

The topic of interagency coordination has historical, contemporary, and future relevance. A memorandum published by the Joint Staff in 1961 complaining about the interagency process could just as easily have been published in 2001. It bemoaned the fact that agencies were reluctant to cooperate for security reasons and lacked the ability to look beyond the immediate crisis.⁴ Those same complaints have again been raised in both Afghanistan and Iraq and are echoing throughout Congress. Additionally, the President’s recent inaugural address calling for the U.S. to lead the world wide expansion of democracy implies that interagency coordination will have a role well after the current conflicts have terminated. In fact interagency coordination goes beyond coordinating civilian and military efforts. Anytime the United States engages another sovereign state multiple agencies are involved. Therefore, this topic has relevance outside the limited scope of nation building.⁵

³ Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, (Ithaca: Cornell Univ Press, 1996), 1.

⁴ David Tucker, “The RMA and the Interagency: Knowledge and Speed vs. Ignorance and Sloth?,” *Parameters* 30, no. 3 (autumn 2000): 1.

⁵ Pape, 2-11.

Given the importance of interagency coordination it is unfortunate that the interagency topic has dropped from the public eye. In fact, no major congressional hearings dealing with interagency coordination have occurred in over nine months. However, the hearings that were held produced a significant body of work. The documents presented at the hearings provided insight into both the process of forming an interagency department and the product (organizational structure) that may result from the hearings.

There are two competing organizational theories that can impact the interagency structure. The first is a traditional 20th century organizational structure. The second is a postmodern organizational structure. Each of these structures possesses different strengths and weaknesses. When considered alone, neither fully addresses the problem of interagency coordination. However, each theory's individual problems may be understood and overcome by applying organizational theory, Mintzberg's "emergent strategy" model, and Dr. David Tucker's interagency model.

The overarching goal of the research was to understand and compensate for the inherent shortcomings of the individual interagency proposals and to propose a technique to overcome those problems. Input from Congress and recognized experts identified the problem set and established the minimum criteria that any proposed solution must meet. Consequently, competing proposals could be evaluated based on their ability to achieve the goals set forth by Congress. After the initial evaluation it became apparent that there were significant environmental and organizational factors not considered by either Congress or the experts they consulted. As a result, the research investigated the interagency environment and organizational theory in order to bound the problem more effectively. The proposals were then evaluated again incorporating input from Congress,

recognized experts, the environment, and organizational theory. The result was a recommendation that incorporates all of the pertinent factors. Therefore, the first step in the process is to delineate the interagency coordination problems and requirements identified by Congress.

Congress Establishes the Framework

In response to the perceived interagency weaknesses, Senators Lugar and Biden the Republican and Democrat leaders of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee presented the “Stabilization and Reconstruction Civilian Management Act.” The primary goal of their legislation was to “establish a more robust civilian capability to respond quickly and effectively to post-conflict situations and other complex emergencies.”⁶ The committee considered numerous “think tank” studies and testimony from recognized experts in interagency operations and government reorganization to draft their proposal.⁷ In proposing their legislation four goals were identified by the experts and accepted by the committee:

- The civilian foreign affairs agencies should be better organized for overseas crisis response, and the Secretary of State should play a lead role in this effort.
- There should be improved standing capacity within the civilian agencies to respond to complex emergencies and to work in potentially hostile environments.
- The agencies must be capable and flexible enough to provide a robust partner to the military when necessary or to lead a crisis response effort when appropriate.
- The rapid mobilization of resources must be shared by the civilian agencies and the military. While the need to ensure security will continue to fall on the shoulders of the military, the post conflict demands on the armed services would be reduced by more effectively tapping civilian expertise.⁸

⁶ Congress, Senate, Senator Lugar making opening statements for the Committee on Foreign Relations. *Hearing on the Stabilization and Reconstruction Civilian Management Act*. 108th Cong., 2nd sess., 3 March 2004, 1.

⁷ U.S. Congress, Senate, Sen. Lugar Statement, 2004, 3.

⁸ U.S. Congress, Senate, Sen. Lugar Statement, 2004, 2.

Just as there was a consensus among the experts and committee members on the legislative goals there was also consensus on the obstacles that must be overcome to achieve true interagency coordination. Hans Binnendijk, the director of the Center for Technology and National Security Policy at National Defense University, was most articulate in communicating the largest impediments to interagency progress. He identified three critical government shortcomings: no organizational structure capable of harnessing the capabilities of the entire United States Government, no technological link to the various agencies, and no decentralized planning process coordinated by the NSC.⁹ Consequently, any proposed solution to the interagency problem set must accomplish the goals set forth by Senator Lugar while overcoming the deficiencies identified by Mr. Binnendijk and others.

A method for analyzing each study is needed in order to determine which of the studies can achieve Senator Lugar's vague goals and overcome the sizable obstacles impeding interagency coordination. Analysis of previous reorganizations such as the Department of Defense (DoD) and reorganization of the Department of Homeland Security reveals that many of those organizational changes represented responses to short term requirements and were attempts to institutionalize the organizational experiences of prominent military commanders and department secretaries. In other words, reforms tend to be built around analogies to historical and personal experiences rather than through the consideration of organizational theory. Recognizing that, reforms have often been particularistic and the success or failure of a reform has been more a matter of how reforms were implemented than the result of conscious design. However, the problem

⁹ Congress, Senate, Hans Binnendijk statement for the Committee on Foreign Relations, *Hearing on the Stabilization and Reconstruction Civilian Management Act*. 108th Cong., 2nd sess., 3 March 2004, 2-3.

still remains, how to assess the proposals for improving interagency national security planning and execution?

One way to assess the proposals, the approach taken here, is to compare the proposed reorganizations with contemporary organizational theory to determine whether the competing proposals are merely reformed analogies and organizational metaphors or actually new approaches to governmental design. This approach cannot determine whether a proposal will be effective. It does reveal whether the proposal is merely an extension of the existing design, a short term vice long-term innovation. Organizational theory provides a useful methodology with which to compare and determine the strengths and weaknesses of the organizational structures. However, two particular studies provide an excellent contrast in government reorganization. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) presented a study that based interagency reorganization on the experience of the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reform Act. The Markle foundation's proposal for organizing Homeland Security provides another approach to reorganizing interagency efforts using emerging theories of technology to resolve the interagency conflict. While the urge to reorganize quickly is understandable, the fact of the matter is governmental reorganizations, especially those proposed by Congress, are complicated. To understand how complicated they are requires an examination of each proposal and its ability to address both the goals and the shortfalls identified by the Senate Committee.

CSIS: Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era

“Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era” was a two-year study that provided analysis and recommended solutions for improving

interagency coordination in nation building.¹⁰ A brief review of CSIS’s previous work provides insight in both their methodology and conclusions. CSIS “played a key role in building the analytic foundation for the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act.”¹¹ CSIS provided expert testimony and presented studies to Congress pressing for reform.¹² Given the group’s close association with the successful passage of such a storied piece of legislation it was logical for the CSIS researchers to use the GNA in the title and as a symbol of successful reform. In *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols* the researchers used the GNA as a foundation from which to build an interagency bureaucracy.¹³ A critical analysis of the study brings in question whether the model for change drove the research or if the research drove the model for change. Notwithstanding, the study identifies itself as taking a “problem centric approach” that identifies root causes and recommends “pragmatic” solutions to interagency coordination.¹⁴ The next step in understanding how *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols* approached interagency operations is identifying the foundation on which the study proceeded.

The CSIS report begins by observing that the USG’s failure to integrate a comprehensive interagency strategy into military operations is a trait shared “by every administration in recent history.”¹⁵ The researchers state that the legislation passed in 1986 did not and realistically could not have anticipated the threats and global security situation existing today.¹⁶ As a result the study seeks to expand (rather than reinvent) the GNA and apply it to the interagency process. This retrospective process is prevalent

¹⁰ Murdock, 6-7.

¹¹ Murdock, 6-7.

¹² James R. Locher III, *Victory on the Potomac*, (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 167-170

¹³ Murdock, 6-7.

¹⁴ Murdock, 6.

¹⁵ Murdock, 60.

¹⁶ Murdock, 60.

throughout the study. By looking at historical events the researchers appear to develop a structure designed to solve the current problems rather than anticipate future problems. In fact the study itself cites the problems in Afghanistan and Iraq as justifications for “accepting the risks associated with organizational change.”¹⁷ The CSIS study’s analysis of the interagency process discovered several systemic problems that created obstacles and impeded previous US nation-building operations.

According to the study, the key obstacles preventing interagency capabilities from being leveraged in nation-building missions are: an absence of interagency doctrine, the absence of a planning culture outside of DoD, the absence of planning expertise outside of DoD, and the lack of a national interagency strategy.¹⁸ These shortcomings focus on the problems that continue to impede effective interagency actions in Afghanistan and Iraq. The researchers also expound on the organizational and planning problems identified by Hans Binnendijk and Congress. According to CSIS, a sound interagency doctrine would formalize the organizational structure and enhance its organizational capability to plan. However, the absence of skilled planners would probably render any organizational fixes moot.¹⁹ Therefore, CSIS sees the problems as both organizational and educational and that view is reflected in its recommended solutions.²⁰ The study’s pertinent recommendations are identified below (for the entire list see Annex A).

- President should designate a Deputy Assistant to the President on the NSC [National Security Council] as having lead responsibility for integrating agency strategies and plans and ensuring greater unity of effort among agencies during execution, and should establish a new NSC office with this mandate.

¹⁷ Murdock, 22

¹⁸ Murdock, 59-62.

¹⁹ Murdock, 61.

²⁰ Congress, Senate, Dr. John J. Hamre (CEO CSIS) statement to the Committee on Foreign Relations. *Hearing on the Stabilization and Reconstruction Civilian Management Act*. 108th Cong., 2nd sess., 3 March 2004, 1-9.

- Secretaries of all agencies likely to be involved in complex operations abroad should establish their own planning offices to lead the development of agency plans and participate in the interagency planning process.
- For each operation, the President should designate one senior official to be in charge of and accountable for integrating U.S. interagency operations on the ground. Congress should establish a new Agency for Stability Operations that is charged with assessing and preparing for stability operations that would report directly to the Secretary of State.
- Congress should establish a new Agency for Stability Operations, with a Civilian Stability Operations Corps (CSOC) and Reserve, that is charged with: assessing and preparing for stability operations; organizing, training and equipping civilian capabilities for such operations; and rapidly deploying civilian experts to the field.²¹

In summary the study addresses all of Senator Lugar's and the committee's interagency criteria. If implemented, the CSIS recommendations would organize the civilian foreign affairs agencies better, improve the standing capacity for civilian agencies to mobilize and respond to complex crises, and train the civilian structure to work in collaboration with the military. Additionally, the changes would be implemented within the context of the government's existing organizational structure. In fact the authors of the study recognize that they focused primarily on "pragmatism" and that pragmatism may have led to a "lack of boldness in [their] recommendations."²² However they also believe that "caution is warranted" because "[o]rganizational reforms are rife with unintended consequences" and these reforms involve the nation's security and should not be dealt with lightly.²³ Therefore, CSIS developed a new agency that could expand civilian capacities and operate in the current governmental structure.

CSIS recommended a new Agency for Stability Operations, which would answer directly to the Secretary of State and a Deputy Assistant to the President on Stability Operations who would lead NSC coordination efforts. The new agency would "catalogue

²¹ Murdock, 63-67.

²² Murdock, 24-25.

²³ Murdock, 25.

non-military capabilities and resources within the U.S. government that could be used in [stability] operations.”²⁴ The agency would establish contacts with civilian experts outside the government whose expertise ranges from holding of elections to rebuilding infrastructure. Furthermore, the Agency for Stabilization would establish formal relationships with other government agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and “foreign partners” in order to begin establishing the contacts necessary to successfully conduct stability operations.²⁵ The Deputy for Stability Operations would ensure a unity of effort among and between the various government agencies.²⁶ The result is a new organization that resembles a traditional 20th century organizational structure.

Traditional 20th century organizations have certain definitive characteristics. The structures contain well-defined hierarchical relationships, stress a division of labor, and prize accountability and effectiveness above all else.²⁷ The hierarchical relationships provide an organization a well-defined distribution of authority.²⁸ In this case, the new Agency for Stability Operations provides the government with a single entity responsible for interagency coordination. By virtue of formal authority vested in the new agency, the agency would be responsible for controlling or managing the interagency process.

Control and authority are a constant theme in the CSIS recommendations and an enduring characteristic of the traditional 20th century organization. To wit, the study’s first four recommendations focus on clearly establishing relationships, roles, and fixing responsibility while the last five delineate congressional requirements. The reason for

²⁴ Murdock, 65.

²⁵ Murdock, 65-66.

²⁶ Murdock, 63.

²⁷ Tucker, “RMA and the Interagency,” 4-5.

²⁸ Mary Jo Hatch, *Organization Theory*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 164-165.

accountability and structure is that it promotes efficiency and oversight.²⁹ The study lays out a very simple structure with distinct divisions of labor and clear responsibilities. The structure promotes efficiency in crisis management, long-term stability, and oversight.

These themes resonate well with the legislative branch for a number of reasons. First, Congress' constitutional responsibilities include oversight and allocation of funds. Therefore, any proposal that fixes responsibility and clearly defines the roles of the various actors makes Congress' job easier and is more likely to be considered seriously. Second, CSIS proposed an organizational structure that can be created within the existing government systems, promote oversight of the interagency process in both Iraq and Afghanistan and, and provide a single point of contact for both the executive and legislative branches to promote their policy agendas.³⁰

A cursory look at the CSIS study reveals that its recommendations were tailored to appeal to Congress and work within the existing system. Clearly, CSIS understands the environment in which it is recommending change. The recommended structure and organization addresses most of problems and solution sets laid out by both the Senate committee and the "interagency experts" that testified. However, there are two key aspects that the CSIS study did not adequately address: "the lack of an organizational structure capable of harnessing the capabilities of the entire United States Government [and] the [lack] of a means (technology) to link the various agencies."³¹ Though the study described the roles and responsibilities associated with the new Agency for Stability Operations it never specified how it would routinely integrate all expertise from the other. Additionally, the CSIS study never addressed the means to link the various agencies. In order to address the government's concerns fully another study should be considered.

²⁹ Tucker, "RMA and the Interagency," 3.

³⁰ Murdock, 63-68.

³¹ U.S. Congress, Senate, Binnendijk statement, 2004, 1-3.

Markle Foundation: Protecting America's Freedom in the Information Age

The Markle Foundation approached the problem of interagency coordination from an institutional perspective different from that of CSIS. The Markle Foundation was created in 1927 “to promote the advancement and diffusion of knowledge...[for] the general good of mankind.”³² Their research tends to focus on technological solutions to complex information management issues. For example they have conducted studies on secure information sharing in health care, the development of a networked Federal Government, and a networked Homeland Security Agency. The Homeland Security study is the one of interest here.

The Markle Foundation initiated the study, “Protecting America’s Freedom in the Information Age” to propose an alternative structure to the nascent Homeland Security Agency. The study proposed integrating the intelligence capabilities of the diverse network of federal agencies recently assigned to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) while simultaneously connecting the department to agencies at the state and local level.³³ Though it focused on Homeland Security its organizational structure and objectives provide an interesting contrast to CSIS’s organizational design.

“Protecting America’s Freedom in the Information Age” looks at the vertical and horizontal integration of disparate federal agencies. The report recommends incorporating state agencies, local governments, academia and private industry into a networked system capable of sharing information in real time.³⁴ The Markle Foundation study described how this information network could assist in preventing and protecting the U.S. from

³² “Markle Foundation: Addressing Critical Public Needs in the Information Age”: available from <http://www.Markle.org/>.

³³ Zoë Baird and James L. Barksdale, et al., “Protecting America’s Freedom in the Information Age.” New York City: Markle Foundation, October 2002, 1; Available from <http://www.markle.org>.

³⁴ Baird and Barksdale, 1-2, 12.

another terrorist attack. The researchers contend that the government can use information more effectively by “linking collection with sound and imaginative analysis derived from *multiple perspectives* [emphasis added]...to support end-users.”³⁵ Thus, the study’s organizational design focuses on information management, integration, and implementation at all levels of government rather than integration, execution, and oversight centralized at the national level. According to the study, information management rather than the centralized control suggested by the CSIS study is the key to rapid and accurate decision making.³⁶

The basic Markle premise is that “solutions start in the way people think and work together.”³⁷ As a result, the researchers suggested that a peer network with a few key hubs was an appropriate structure for effectively managing and utilizing available intelligence. Therefore, the basis of the Markle report’s organizational structure is the creation of a network that formalizes the interactions between parties and permits them to draw from each other’s sources and information. This networked structure gives each government level a more complete intelligence picture and allows them to make improved decisions because each government level would understand the entire situation better.³⁸ Since the researchers place a premium on information management the suggested structure is unusual. The model is best described as a “post modern organizational structure.”³⁹

The bedrock of postmodern organizational theory is knowledge fragmentation. Postmodernism assumes that “knowledge is produced in so many different bits and pieces that there can be no reasonable expectation that it will ever add up to an integrated and

³⁵ Baird and Barksdale, 9-10.

³⁶ Baird and Barksdale, 2-3.

³⁷ Baird and Barksdale, 2.

³⁸ Baird and Barksdale, 13.

³⁹ Hatch, 43.

singular view.”⁴⁰ Postmodernists frequently challenge the notion of an absolute truth and the ability to reach the one true answer to a problem.⁴¹ To a postmodernist it is illogical to impose a hierarchical structure on a diverse group of entities in hope of achieving some consensus and thereby solving an extremely complex problem. It is more likely that a small number of nodes would be responsible for collecting the information from numerous sources in hope that by consolidating the available data the problem would become better defined. Only then could *a* solution (vice *the* solution to a problem) be identified. Given the postmodernists’ approach to knowledge fragmentation and problem solving it is likely that they would view the interagency differently than the CSIS researchers.

To the postmodernist the interagency process appears to exist in a network rather than a hierarchy.⁴² This network has numerous decision nodes that work at different speeds and towards different goals.⁴³ Additionally, this network extends beyond the federal government into state and local agencies, private organizations, and public institutions; further fragmenting information.⁴⁴ As a result, “Protecting America’s Freedom” put forth an organizational structure focused more on information management than decision-making and accountability.

The Markle Foundation study describes the interagency process as a network of entities working towards their own parochial ends that if achieved, contribute to the security of the nation.⁴⁵ However, each agency needs information from the other in order to achieve their discreet ends. The requirement to share and exchange information is the

⁴⁰ Hatch , p.44.

⁴¹ Hatch, p. 44.

⁴² Hatch, 44-45.

⁴³ Tucker, “RMA and the Interagency,” 4.

⁴⁴ Baird and Barksdale, 15-17.

⁴⁵ Baird and Barksdale, 13-15.

common thread that binds all the groups together.⁴⁶ Due to the diversity of government actors responsible for law enforcement, information exchange is critical.

Although the Federal Government leads homeland security the nation's real strength lies in the local governments. For example: there are 11,500 FBI agents but over 500,000 state and local law enforcers. There are several thousand professionals at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) but over two million potential local responders.⁴⁷ These statistics indicate that the local and state agencies will provide and consume the bulk of the information. The same can be said of the interagency process. Though a central hub may be necessary the nature of the crisis will shape which agency possesses the expertise to take the lead. Therefore, if a crisis arises that requires expertise beyond the capability or expertise of the Federal Government a network capable of receiving, processing, and transmitting significant amounts of information to and from numerous civilian and local nodes must exist.

The Markle study recommended creating two nodes to act as focal points for information management. However, the study stressed that these nodes are not centers of activity but simply "clearing houses" through which various actors could access sources or information. In fact, within this networked system the information itself would be only of secondary importance. The network would provide the sources of the information (down to the specific New York City police officer for example), which the authors contend would be even more valuable than the data itself.⁴⁸ Additionally, the network would act as a peer network with information flowing from the bottom up rather than the traditional top down flow in a traditional hierarchical system.⁴⁹ Lastly, the true strength

⁴⁶ Baird and Barksdale, 13.

⁴⁷ Baird and Barksdale, 11.

⁴⁸ Baird and Barksdale, 18-19.

⁴⁹ Baird and Barksdale, 11-14.

of the network is that it expands on the “existing organizations and professional networks already working in their communities and regions.”⁵⁰ Thus, the network seeks to formalize through connectivity the existing informal connections that are in use today. In order for this domestic organizational model to be useful it must improve the interagency’s capability to conduct stability operations. Additionally, it must meet the requirements laid out by Senators Lugar and Biden and overcome the weaknesses addressed by Hans Binnendijk.

It is reasonable to apply the Markle study to stability operations. Though the Markle study specifically addresses Homeland Security it has applicability well beyond that limited topic. The study itself implies that the problems in Homeland Security are simply a manifestation of poor interagency coordination. The same can be said of stability operations. Poor interagency coordination is the reason the USG cannot effectively plan or execute stability operations. Therefore, the Markle study’s postmodernist organizational solutions focused on interagency coordination and connectivity are as applicable to stability operations as they are to Homeland Security.

Applying postmodernist organizational theory to interpret many of the congressional requirements leads to very different organizational conclusions. For example, the congressional recommendation to organize foreign affairs agencies better and to assign the Secretary of State a leading role looks very different in a postmodern view.⁵¹ The goal can be achieved by connecting numerous agents to permit the rapid exchange of critical information and sources and by establishing the Secretary of State as a key node in the network. This structure brings together the fragmented information and gives the Secretary of State the ability to coalesce the information and make it available

⁵⁰ Baird and Barksdale, 14.

⁵¹ U.S. Congress, Senate, Sen. Lugar Statement, 2004, 3.

for the key decision makers in the different departments. Therefore, in a postmodernist world a networked system (rather than a change in organizational structure) could meet the congressional requirement.

The second directive is more difficult to achieve using a network solution. It requires the government to improve the standing capacity within civilian agencies to respond to international emergencies and work in potentially hostile environments.⁵² The study recommends a network capable of providing critical information to the organizations responding to a crisis. However, at the national level the government structure remains diffuse and incapable of forming an expeditionary team. Therefore, a Markle style network does not explicitly address the physical requirements of crisis response.

The third requirement seeks to create an organization possessing both the capability and flexibility to be a “robust partner” to the military and to lead a crisis response when necessary.⁵³ Clearly, the network’s ability to rapidly gather and analyze voluminous amounts of data makes it a valuable partner to the military when trying to marshal all the resources at the government’s disposal. However, structure’s formalized network does not translate into a standing organizational structure. Therefore, it does not identify a single agency as the responsible agent for planning or executing a complex stability operation.

The last requirement set by Congress was to mobilize resources rapidly and to more effectively “tap” civilian expertise. That requirement has different connotations in the postmodern environment.⁵⁴ The most important resource in a postmodern world is information and the most difficult thing to do is gather and analyze the available

⁵² U.S. Congress, Senate, Sen. Lugar Statement, 2004, 3.

⁵³ U.S. Congress, Senate, Sen. Lugar Statement, 2004, 3.

⁵⁴ U.S. Congress, Senate, Sen. Lugar Statement, 2004, 3.

information rapidly. The networked structure mobilizes the critical postmodern resources (information) and connects the civilian expertise both inside and outside the government via a well-integrated network. Thus, in a postmodern environment the “networked government” fully addresses the final congressional requirement. The next issue is how this networked organizational structure overcomes the government’s systemic failures identified by Dr. Binnendijk.

The government system’s failures included a structure incapable of “harnessing the capabilities of the entire United States Government,” the absence of a means to link the various agencies and of a decentralized planning process.⁵⁵ If assessed in the context of a postmodern environment the Markle study fares well. The study’s interagency network attends to the first two problems. The network specifically addresses going outside the Federal Government to maximize information sharing and putting that information in some useable form. Inherent in the proposal is the means to link the various agencies together via an integrated and complex network. The last issue however, is more abstractly addressed. That is, inherent in the networked structure are two hubs that act as a clearinghouse for information but also serve as the lead agents for Homeland Security. It is likely that a similar construct could be applied for stability operations. It is reasonable to conclude that the two hubs would be the Departments of Defense and State. Thus, the Markle study addresses each of Dr. Binnendijk’s concerns but the recommendations for contingency operations are not as clear.

The Markle proposal for Homeland Security never specifically addressed planning for contingency operations. However, extrapolating from the concept establishing two primary hubs suggests that these agencies would be the leads in routine

⁵⁵ U.S. Congress, Senate, Binnendijk statement, 2004, 3.

planning and during times of crisis. In a postmodern environment the key to proper planning is leveraging information rather than leveraging authority. A hierarchical structure gives the illusion of authority by allowing the lead agency to task others to provide information as needed. The post-modern structure allows the lead agent to draw on diverse opinions and expertise that reside in an existing database while hierarchical structure may limit the planners to the opinion of one person who has been tasked to represent a specific agency. However, decision-making authority during a time of crisis poses a different challenge to the organizational structure.

The Markle study never addressed who retains the decision-making authority for a national emergency. Instead the Markle study focused on coordinating the efforts necessary to prevent a crisis as well as coordinating efforts for crisis response. In fact, the CSIS study did not address decision-making either. Each study focused on the planning and coordinating aspects of their recommended organizational structures. It is fair to conclude that each study recognized the NSC as the decision-making authority in time of national crisis. In the case of the Markle study, it is also fair to conclude that decisions will be made by the state and local executive branches of government during local and regional domestic crises.

Taken as a whole Markle Study does a remarkable job of addressing many of the congressional requirements and all of the shortcomings. Similarly, the CSIS study does an excellent job of addressing the same criteria when analyzed within its traditional 20th Century organizational context. However, a pure academic discussion of the proposals does not adequately address their applicability to the existing system. Thus, the first issue becomes what is the nature of the interagency environment? Which then leads to the next issues of how would these proposals function in the interagency environment and how

can the strengths of the two proposals be applied while their weaknesses minimized? The first step in completing this analysis is describing the interagency environment.

Understanding the Environment

The interagency environment is a complex collection of actors working towards individual and collective goals. Dr. David Tucker describes the interagency environment as a “network disguised as a hierarchy.” The environment incorporates different decision nodes and speeds and has both horizontal and vertical dimensions.⁵⁶ In other words, the interagency environment is both a hierarchy and a network and both are necessary in a complex world. The recent creation of the Department of Homeland Security provides an example of a government reorganization that failed to appreciate the complexity of the environment.

There has been significant criticism about the Department of Homeland Security interagency reorganization that apparently failed to appreciate the dual nature of the interagency environment. The Department of Homeland Security was recently referred to as a “bureaucratic Frankenstein, with clumsily stitched-together limbs and an inadequate, misfiring brain...DHS has been a disaster: underfunded [sic], undermanned, disorganized, and unforgivably slow moving.”⁵⁷ The reason for the criticism is that the organization lacks the connectivity and infrastructure to capitalize on the strengths and eliminate the weaknesses of the formerly independent agencies that collectively make up DHS.⁵⁸ In short, critics contend that the hastily designed organization failed to resolve any of the problems it was designed to fix.

⁵⁶ Tucker, “RMA and the Interagency,” 2-4.

⁵⁷ Michael Crowley, “Playing Defense,” *New Republic* 230, no. 9, (15 March 2004): 17-18.

⁵⁸ Crowley, “Playing Defense,” 17-22.

Further contributing to the DHS's organizational problems is Congress' inability to agree on clear oversight responsibilities. Currently, many of the organizations that reorganized under the DHS umbrella are still monitored by separate committees. Similarly, there is no distinct Homeland Security subcommittee responsible for the agency as a whole.⁵⁹ The result is extensive but fragmented oversight and contradictory guidance from disparate committees to the diverse agencies that were pulled together to work toward a common goal. The DHS structure was designed to promote accountability and information sharing but it has not yet satisfactorily achieved either of those goals. The problems encountered by the DHS illustrate the difficulties associated with a significant governmental reorganization.

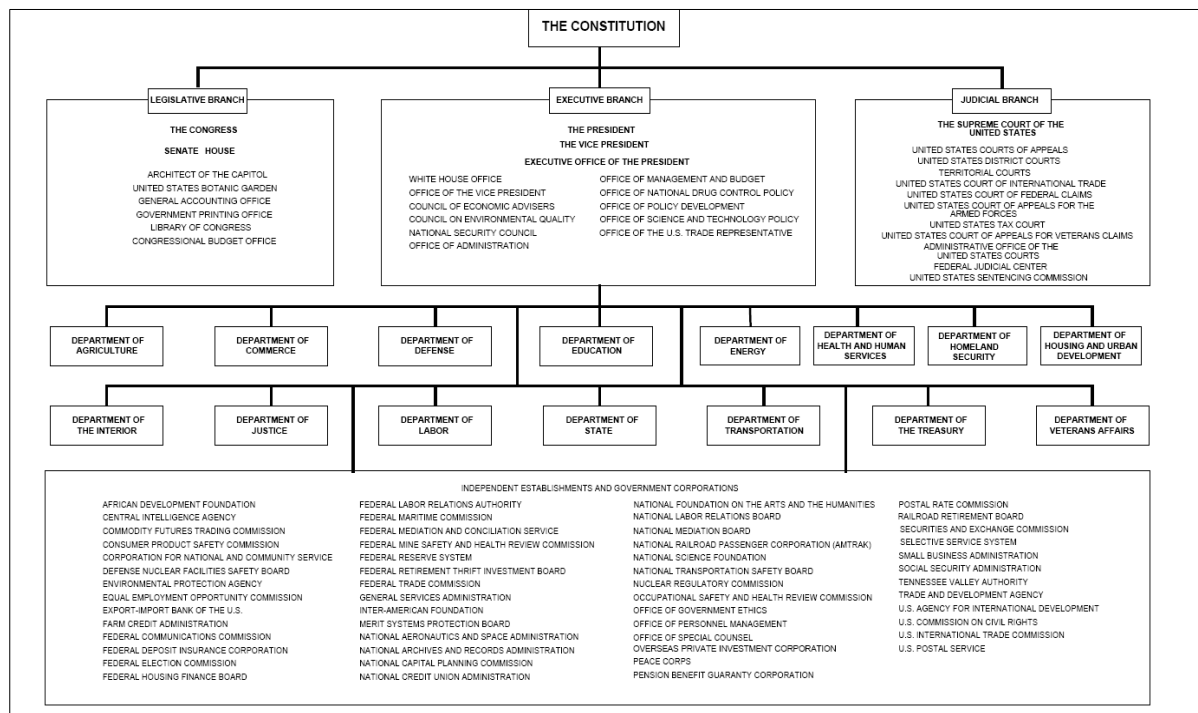


Figure 1: Government Organization

(Source: http://bensguide.gpo.gov/files/gov_chart.pdf)

⁵⁹ Chloe Albanesuis, "Report Calls for Reorganization of Homeland Security Dept.," *CongressDaily*, 13 December 2004, 7.

In order for any reorganization to function two aspects need to be understood; the goals of reorganization and the obstacles to reorganization. The reason for this is simple. Interagency reorganizations only occur with great political will and usually in response to some previous crisis.⁶⁰ Therefore, the goals are frequently designed to prevent a recent failure from reoccurring. However if the underlying problems (or obstacles) that caused the failures are not understood it is unlikely the reorganization will have the desired affect. It appears that DHS was constructed believing that the hierarchical structure would achieve both the accountability and information sharing desired by Congress. In reality it achieved neither.⁶¹

Like the Homeland Security reorganization, the CSIS study clearly saw structure as both the problem and solution to interagency coordination. The Markle Foundation identified information management as the solution. Both proposals fall short of accomplishing Senator Lugar's goals and overcoming Dr. Binnendijk's obstacles. However, taken together the studies come very close to addressing all of the objectives set forth. Considering the Dr. Tucker's interagency environment and Mintzberg's theory of Emergent Strategies the combined studies provide significant insight into a possible solution.

Dr. Tucker views the interagency environment as a complex dichotomy. On paper the government structure appears to be a clearly delineated hierarchical structure (see figure 1). However, upon close examination of the organizational chart it becomes apparent that all the departments are subordinated directly to the President. Since the President cannot arbitrate or resolve every interagency conflict or make every decision involving multiple agencies they must interact with each other as peers and gain

⁶⁰ Jonathan Breul and Hannah Sistare, "Reorganization Now!," *Government Executive*, 36, no. 18, (15 October 2004): 87.

⁶¹ Crowley, "Playing Defense," 18.

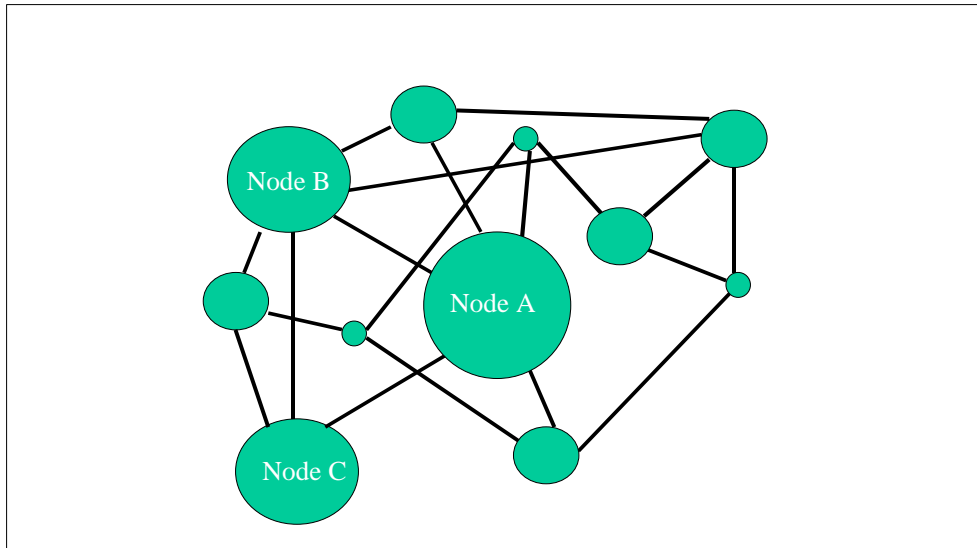


Figure 2: Post Modern Network

(Source: Hatch, figure 3.3, p. 67)

consensus to resolve complex or interagency problems.⁶² Thus, the interagency process is much less hierarchical and more of a network than it appears.⁶³ This has a significant impact on crisis action planning as well as long-term policy implementation.

Dr. Tucker's assertion that the interagency process is a "network disguised as a hierarchy" requires understanding both systems.⁶⁴ A hierarchical system is designed for decisions and information to flow from top down and for the team members to "communicate with the official leader rather than with one another."⁶⁵ However, in a network "information flows freely; decisions require touching multiple bases" (see figure 2).⁶⁶ The existence of this network within a hierarchy presents numerous challenges both in terms of decision-making and oversight. In order to understand how this system functions each part must be analyzed separately.

A cleanly delineated hierarchical structure has significant advantages. During a crisis it can be an efficient mechanism to make decisions rapidly as long as the leader of

⁶² Tucker, "RMA and the Interagency," 38.

⁶³ Tucker, "RMA and the Interagency," 38.

⁶⁴ Tucker, "RMA and the Interagency," 37.

⁶⁵ Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Press, 2003), 96.

⁶⁶ Bolman and Deal, 98.

the hierarchy is focused on the present problem. Additionally, accountability is easily accomplished. Each department head is responsible for their product and the leader of the hierarchy is ultimately responsible for the conduct of the subordinates and the overall decision.⁶⁷ In the case of the Federal Government each agency possesses its own hierarchical structure within the organization with each organization ultimately answering to the President. Therefore, Congressional oversight of each department is simple with their being a single point of contact for each department.⁶⁸ However, the interaction between the departments is complex.

According to Dr. Tucker, the hierarchical nature of the structure facilitates crisis management but protracted, evolving and complex problems require a network capable of building consensus and adapting to the nature of the problem.⁶⁹ In the interagency “network” some actors are more dominant than others and as a result tend to play larger parts in complex problems.⁷⁰ Each node in the network approaches the problems with its own perspective. As the network looks for consensus each nodes’ perspective is vetted and considered. This is an essential part of a networked community. Additionally, in a decentralized network the individual nodes can re-examine their analysis or solution set as the situation evolves without waiting for a central figure to provide specific guidance. This is critical in a complex and evolving problem because it allows the network to adapt to its environment.⁷¹

However, the interactions between the agencies are complex. Each has competing demands and missions. Lobbyists, interest groups, and agendas pull each department in a different direction. Thus the process is slow and cumbersome as well as difficult to

⁶⁷ Bolman and Deal, 50-53.

⁶⁸ Bolman and Deal, 51.

⁶⁹ Tucker, “RMA and the Interagency,” 2-4.

⁷⁰ Hatch, 67.

⁷¹ Tucker, “RMA and the Interagency,” 5-6.

manage or oversee. Given the dual nature of the interagency process it can be described as a network embedded in a hierarchy.⁷² If that is accepted, then the next logical step is to assess the studies in this new environment and to determine their respective strengths and weakness. The comparison produces a modified design better organized for this unusual environment.

The CSIS proposal treats the interagency environment as a hierarchy because it focuses on two key points: crisis management and organizational accountability.⁷³ CSIS concentrates on crisis action planning and forming deployable teams that provide critical support during operations. Additionally, it looks at NSC accountability for interagency operations during the crisis period. These objectives make it completely rational that the CSIS study focused on a hierarchical design for the interagency organization.

In the hierarchical organization crisis planning is streamlined because a single “boss” controls the planning and is “charged with keeping activities aligned with goals.”⁷⁴ Under the current structure, a national crisis requires the President to act as the arbiter of the interagency process in order to get results. This means that the President must oversee each department’s work to ensure that they are acting in accordance with his intent. The CSIS proposal streamlines that process by creating the Agency for Stability Operations.

During times of crisis, the Agency for Stability Operations coordinates the efforts of the other agencies, and thus, gives the NSC a single agency responsible for coordination. This agency would also be responsible for planning interagency contingency operations during times of relative peace.⁷⁵ This planning requirement

⁷² Tucker, “RMA and the Interagency,” 5-6.

⁷³ Murdock, 61-62.

⁷⁴ Bolman and Deal, 51.

⁷⁵ Murdock, 64-65.

combined with the coordination responsibility places accountability for interagency operations squarely on this new organization. That addresses the second strength of a hierarchy, which is accountability.⁷⁶

Establishing a hierarchical structure permits Congress to exercise its oversight responsibility in a much more coherent manner. That is, since one organization is responsible for the coordination of interagency activities Congress can establish committees that oversee the organization's overall performance. In governance "policy is not what one writes but what followers actually do" and CSIS's Agency for Stability Operations could very easily be evaluated by the plans it develops, the execution of those plans, and by the success or failure of the interagency actors involved in nation-building.⁷⁷ This would certainly ease the oversight challenge that Congress faces in today's interagency environment.

However, crisis management and accountability are only two aspects of the interagency environment. The interagency environment is a complex collection of agencies with independent agendas and interests. One of the strengths of the interagency environment is that an exceptional level of expertise resides in each agency. The weakness of the structure (as with most traditional 20th century organizational structures) is that the specialization of the departments led to "enormous inefficiencies" between departments.⁷⁸ Organizational theory will demonstrate that these inefficiencies are normal for any large, complex structure.

According to Mancur Olson small groups within their organization often manipulate large organizations. The reason for this is that members of a large

⁷⁶ Bolman and Deal, 53-55.

⁷⁷ Paul A. Strassman, *The Politics of Information Management*, (New Canaan, Connecticut: The Information Economics Press), 5.

⁷⁸ Robert S. Kaplan, and David P. Norton, *The Balanced Score Card*, (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996), 4.

organization have a difficult time believing that their action has any impact on the “big picture.” However, in a small group each member wields tremendous influence.⁷⁹ For example, a single member of a 15,000-person organization may believe that the organization’s goals are important but does not believe that their actions have a significant impact on achieving those goals. However, when that same individual is one of a four-person research team working on a project, that individual wields tremendous power and that small four-person team may wield a disproportionate amount of influence if there are only ten total teams in that 15,000-person organization. Thus, a small organization can have a disproportionate impact on the larger organization.

In the US government small agencies can have a significant impact on the rest of the government because of their unique skills or expertise. For example, a relatively small and decidedly domestically focused agency like the Department of Agriculture may possess the expertise to shift Afghan farmers away from poppy cultivation. Convincing the Department of Agriculture to commit resources to the US Government’s efforts in Afghanistan may meet internal resistance; that is because the few people who possess the agricultural and economic expertise to this difficult problem may be reluctant to travel to a dangerous region like Afghanistan. Therefore, accommodations and negotiations are necessary to garner the Department of Agriculture’s support and to establish a security situation that will satisfy these key individuals. That is an example of the US government acting more like a network than a hierarchy.

The Markle Foundation Study understood the U.S. government as a network and used a postmodern organizational design to take advantage of its inherent strengths. The

⁷⁹ Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 62 quoted in Mike Moffat, “Your Guide to Economics,” in *About: The Logic of Collective Action* [database on-line] available from http://economics.about.com/cs/macroeconomics/a/logic_of_action_p.htm, p. 3.

study looks at the process of intelligence and information sharing as a long-term iterative process best conducted by a conglomeration of entities all applying their unique expertise. In essence, the Markle study proposed that if the interagency environment were better connected and linked through a few key nodes it could improve on its ability to deal with “protracted problems in changing environments.”⁸⁰

The postmodern organizational structure focuses on information management and the need for the interagency network to reach beyond the Federal Government and take advantage of expertise at state, local, and civilian levels.⁸¹ By extending the network beyond the federal government and increasing the connectivity among and between agencies the study suggests that the network can extend beyond information management into information “use.”⁸² The researchers emphasize that point by stating, “[k]nowledge does not come from the accumulation of random data, but rather it is found in thoughtful and informed inquiries.”⁸³ Ultimately, the responsibility for proper information management rests with the consumer and not with the information manager or some magical information management system.⁸⁴

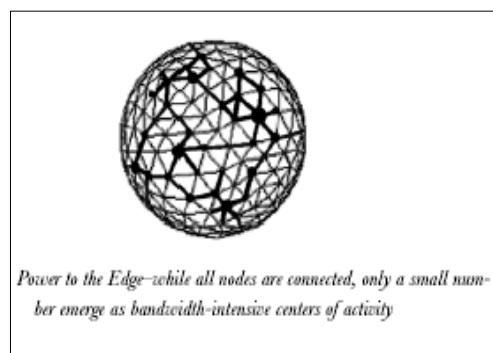


Figure 3: Alberts’ fully connected nodal network

(Source: Alberts and Hayes, *Power to the Edge Power*. Washington, DC: DoD, June 2003 , 92.)

⁸⁰ Baird and Barksdale, 13.

⁸¹ Baird and Barksdale, 18.

⁸² Baird and Barksdale, 9.

⁸³ Baird and Barksdale, 2.

⁸⁴ Strassman, 24-25.

If the consumer has the responsibility to make well-conceived inquiries and to apply information then the postmodern system must be designed around the user's requirements. In a networked system different agencies work at different speeds.⁸⁵ As a result, linked information flows in from different sources at different speeds at different times. The Markle Study's postmodern organization adjusts for this by having a decentralized system designed to incorporate the systems' diverse contributors and analyze the data using programs capable of filtering out routine information and identifying unusual patterns and anomalies.⁸⁶ Thus, the entire postmodern system is arranged around information management and analysis.

The computer network itself is only one aspect of information management. By connecting numerous agencies to their state and local counterparts, academia and eventually critical civilian industries the network would rapidly develop a level of depth that more closely resembles Alberts' "Power to the Edge" model (see figure 3) than the network model described in figure 2. As a result, a trained organization is critical to a properly functioning postmodern organization.

Both Alberts' *Power to the Edge* and the Markle study reached similar conclusions in their network structure and training requirements. For example, both the Markle study and Alberts describe a networked system with a few frequently accessed nodes that transport the user to other less frequently used nodes (much like a Google or Yahoo search does on the internet). Additionally, *Power to the Edge* states, "in a robust network, the burden of ensuring proper distribution is shifted toward the users of information, who must be empowered through training and tools to know what information is relevant to their situation, where they can find it and how value added

⁸⁵ Tucker, "RMA and the Interagency," 68

⁸⁶ Baird and Barksdale, 9-11.

services can be used to support them.”⁸⁷ This reiterates the Markle study’s point that a trained knowledgeable workforce capable of defining the problem and managing information to achieve their desired results is more important than the network. Thus, a postmodern organization is designed to manage information and make decisions based inputs and consensus from other actors. This differs from the traditional 20th century organization that emphasizes a hierarchical system. . The differences are significant and have positive and negative consequences.

The postmodern organization is designed to function in a different manner and for a different purpose than a hierarchy. The network seeks to build consensus and tends to take a long-term approach to problem solving. However, it lacks the agility to manage a time sensitive crisis.⁸⁸ Therefore, the Markle Foundation’s postmodern organizational design is arranged to accept, analyze, and disperse large amounts of information in order to find trends and link seemingly disjointed information.⁸⁹ However, its peer based organization lacks the structure and discipline to rapidly assess and manage an ongoing crisis. Additionally, the decentralized and dispersed network structure inhibits the strict accountability demanded by Congress. As a result, the postmodern system fails to achieve fully the requirements set forth by Congress or to overcome the obstacles identified by Dr. Binnendijk and others.

Senators Lugar and Biden identified requirements that almost exclusively deal with crisis management and were clearly designed with the ongoing problems in Iraq and Afghanistan in mind. The four requirements include the terms “crisis response”, civilians capable of working in “potentially hostile environments”, “provide a robust partner...[or]

⁸⁷ David S. Alberts and Richard E. Hayes, *Power to the Edge: Command and Control in the Information Age*. Washington, DC: Dept of Defense Command and Control Research Program, June 2003 , 92.

⁸⁸ Tucker, “RMA and the Interagency,” 10.

⁸⁹ Baird and Barksdale, 9.

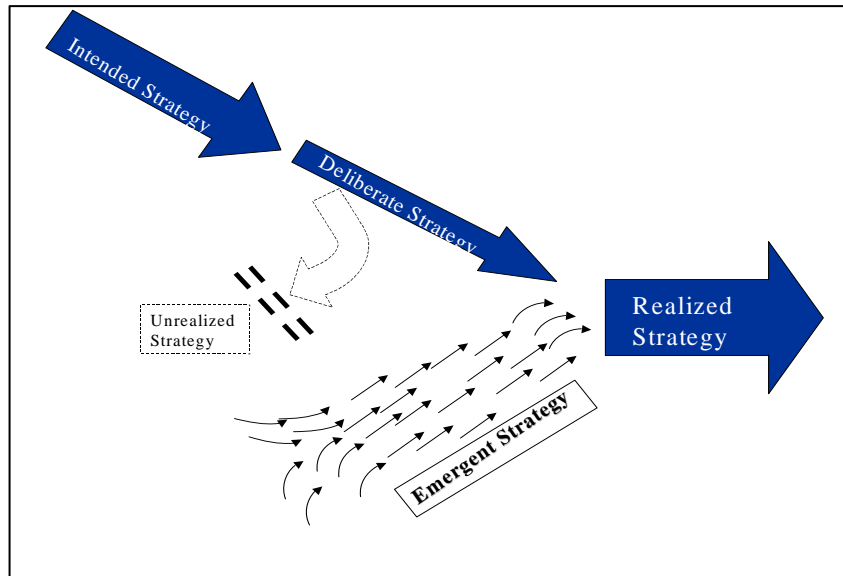


Figure 4: Mintzberg's Emergent Strategy

lead a crisis response effort”, and “rapid mobilization” in each of the respective statements.⁹⁰ Clearly, Dr. Binnendijk was thinking beyond the nation’s immediate requirements. He used phrases such as creating an “organizational structure capable of harnessing the capabilities of the entire United States Government” and addressing the “absence of a means (technology) to link various agencies”, and creating a “decentralized planning process.”⁹¹ In analyzing the DHS, the Markle Foundation took a more holistic approach to the interagency problem and as a result came up with a postmodern system designed to address the systemic problems similar to those addressed by Dr. Binnendijk.

By analyzing the CSIS and the Markle Foundation studies it becomes apparent that they do not adequately addresses either the demands of Congress or the concerns expressed by Dr. Binnendijk and others. If Congress’ and Dr. Binnendijk’s concerns are considered separately the studies do a respectable job addressing one but not the other. The problem is that neither the congressional requirements nor the obstacles provide the

⁹⁰ U.S. Congress, Senate, Sen. Lugar Statement, 2004, 3.

⁹¹ U.S. Congress, Senate, Binnendijk Statement, 2004, 2.

nation a comprehensive strategy. Within the government it is just as important to have a structure capable of dealing with a crisis, as it is a system designed for addressing long-term problems.⁹² By applying strategic design strategies to both the congressional demands as well as the competing studies a comprehensive strategic plan can be developed.

Henry Mintzberg's "Emergent Strategy" concept describes the numerous internal and external factors influencing the implementation of plans and strategies. If applied to the interagency process, his concept provides a methodology that accounts for the numerous competing pressures that affect strategy development and implementation. Mintzberg defines "strategy" as both a plan for the future and a pattern of past behaviors.⁹³ Many organizations develop a strategy for the future (called the intended strategy) but over time the intended strategy is influenced by the organization's routine patterns of conduct resulting in a realized strategy.⁹⁴ This process is better explained using the example below.

Example: Senators Lugar and Biden convene a hearing seeking new solutions to the persistent problem of interagency coordination. The Senators' plan is to apply new and innovative solution sets to an enduring problem. In order to solve the problem hearings will be held to solicit input from renowned experts. In the past, CSIS provided well thought out recommendations on topics such as the DoD's reorganization, Iraq reconstruction, and Homeland Security. Additionally, CSIS has just completed a study on interagency coordination. Therefore, the committee asks CSIS to testify and to provide its recommend initiatives. CSIS understands the desires of Congress and thus, makes

⁹² Tucker, "RMA and the Interagency," 68-69.

⁹³ Henry Mintzberg, *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning*, (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 23.

⁹⁴ Mintzberg, 24.

recommendations that achieve or surpass the requirements of Senators Lugar and Biden. The Senators see the logic in the recommendations, write a bill that articulates their plan for the future or their “intended strategy.”⁹⁵ As the bill works its way through committee and then Congress changes will be made and some details will be changed that will result in a new bill that represents the will of the entire Congress rather than two senators or the committee. The changes to the bill represent “deliberate and unrealized strategies.” The “deliberate strategies” are those that are enacted while “unrealized strategies” are those recommendations that were eliminated from the bill.⁹⁶ Thus, the “deliberate” strategy reflects the collective will of Congress. However, institutional forces influence every congressional bill or organizational strategy.

There is a factor that exerts pressure on the final or “deliberate strategy” and it is called “emergent strategy.” Emergent strategy is defined as a “realized pattern [that] was not expressly intended.”⁹⁷ In this example let’s assume that the bill created a new interagency organization that took the form of a 20th century organizational structure. However, the interagency system continued to operate as the networked system described by Dr. Tucker. The result would be an organizational structure that would adapt in order to function in its environment. The deliberate strategy designed in the bill will be influenced by the emergent strategy or pattern of past behaviors that reflect the reality of the environment. The result would be a “realized strategy” that includes components of both the deliberate and emergent strategies (see figure 4). Thus, the past pattern of behavior continued to effect government’s new strategy. So the issue is how can an organization prepare itself to implement a new strategy that is in conflict with existing practices?

⁹⁵ Mintzberg, 24.

⁹⁶ Mintzberg, 24.

⁹⁷ Mintzberg, 24-25.

Robert Kaplan and David Norton stated, “Joint ventures, while increasingly part of the business landscape, have proven to be an operational challenge for many companies”⁹⁸ Interagency coordination is no different. The interagency system is a complex grouping of independent agencies within a hierarchical structure. In order for the agencies to function on a routine basis they developed an informal network.⁹⁹ This network represents the emergent strategy that every intended and deliberate strategy must contend with. In developing a strategy to improve interagency coordination the hierarchical system and informal network should be considered in order to prevent either from adversely affecting the intended strategy.

The CSIS study does an excellent job addressing the interagency system as a hierarchy but fails to recognize the existence of the informal network. The Markle study focuses almost exclusively on improving the network among and between agencies as well as capitalizing on its untapped potential but ignores the accountability and authority necessary in order to function in the government’s hierarchical system. In order to fulfill Congress’s requirements and overcome the obstacles cited by Dr. Binnendijk, the best option would be to combine the two studies and take advantage of their strengths and minimize their weaknesses.

The CSIS organizational structure is likely to be adopted by Congress. This is because Congress has a penchant for adopting hierarchical structures that allow them to more easily perform their oversight function as evidenced in the DHS restructuring. This “Deliberate Strategy” of creating a new organization must contend with the “Emerging Strategy” reflected in the unique interactions among and between the various agencies. Therefore, a method that could incorporate both the deliberate and emerging strategies

⁹⁸ Kaplan and Norton, p. 173.

⁹⁹ Tucker, “RMA and the Interagency,” 66-70.

without sacrificing congressional oversight would be an improvement over the CSIS proposal that only addressed a deliberate strategy. Applying some of the Markle Study recommendations to the new agency recommended by CSIS would deal with many of the emerging strategy issues that are unresolved.

The new Agency for Stability and Reconstruction could be formed and act as one of the key hubs in comprehensive interagency network. The agency will have a requirement to draw on expertise located throughout the federal, state, and local governments and provide information to the Executive and Legislative branches. Without a well-defined process or network that allows for a regular exchange of information, the new agency will likely be relegated to an actor without the depth or breadth of expertise necessary to accomplish their requirements who must use informal connections in order to garner the intellectual capital required to achieve their objectives.

Conclusions

Organizational theory has a place in government reorganization. As the government begins “standing-up” the new Agency for Stability Operations organizational theory should be used to shape its development. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of traditional 20th century and post-modern organizational structures may help in the design as well as the integration of agencies critical to stability and reconstruction operations. Furthermore, understanding the interagency environment and the influence it has on policy execution should affect the organizational design of the new agency.

Using organizational theory as a methodology to analyze the environment can assist in developing the proper organizational structure. The Agency for Stability Operations will interact with numerous other actors that have different goals and

objectives as well as competing demands on time and resources. At the same time, the organization will be accountable to Congress for its actions and expenditures. Therefore, the Agency for Stability Operations will likely need a hierarchical system with postmodern connectivity in order to meet Congress' requirements and coordinate with the other agencies. The postmodernism aspect is critical because of its principle of knowledge diffusion.

The Agency for Stability Operations must recognize that much of the expertise necessary to conduct stability and reconstruction operations resides outside the Federal Government. For example, the best source of information on how to rebuild a city may be city managers rather than a specific federal agency. The new agency's structure should be constructed to interact with state and local government officials in order to ensure unfettered access to expertise in rebuilding a city or province. The network should also be able to reach non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and private organizations that may have expertise in Stability Operations. A purely hierarchical structure reminiscent of the 20th century organizational design might not sufficiently incorporate this diffuse knowledge base. However, a post-modern networked organization could establish connectivity with numerous nodes and access them as the need arises. At the same time, it is useful to have a single entity responsible for operations.

Though postmodernist theory is based on a diffusion of knowledge there is an advantage to having a single repository for that information. The traditional 20th century organizational structure and its hierarchal system provides everyone (Congress, NGO's, PVO's, academia, etc) with one responsible agency for them to contact or to provide input. Similarly, the agency can seek support from government and civilian agencies with

the understanding that it is the federal government's sole representative for stability operations. Being the single representative eliminates the constant debate regarding who is responsible for planning and coordinating as well as who will present the options to the NSC. Referring back to Mancur Olson, because of the strategic importance of stability operations this small agency will have enormous influence and tremendous responsibility that will affect virtually all of the USG. Thus, a hybrid structure that takes advantage of the strengths of the traditional 20th century organizational structure and the postmodern organizational structure seems to make sense.

The integrated solution may seem intuitive or obscenely obvious. However, the Department of Homeland Security provides an excellent example of the impact a poorly conceived organizational structure can have on an organization's ability to function. Given the government's recent reorganization history, it is important that organizational theory be considered and applied in order to improve the likelihood that the organizational changes will have the desired effect.

History demonstrates that government reorganizations only occur when there is significant political will that is driven by an equally significant political problem.¹⁰⁰ Organizational theory provides a foundation from which a new organization can be built. Had organizational theory, rather than historical precedence or a desire to avoid repeating recent history been used to build DHS it may have functioned more efficiently and effectively. That is not to say that organizational theory is a panacea to all reorganization problems. However, it does provide a baseline from which changes can be made based on an assessment of the environment and the organization's mission. As the government creates this new Agency for Stability and Reconstruction Operations there is still a

¹⁰⁰ Sistare, Breul, "Reorganization Now!," 87.

window of opportunity to carefully analyze its goals, objectives, and environment before its structure is etched in stone.

Annex A

The following is the list of CSIS recommendations in their entirety:

- President should designate a Deputy Assistant to the President on the NSC [National Security Council] as having lead responsibility for integrating agency strategies and plans and ensuring greater unity of effort among agencies during execution, and should establish a new NSC office with this mandate.
- Each President, early in his or her tenure, should review the guidance establishing standard operating procedures for the planning of complex operations.
- Secretaries of all agencies likely to be involved in complex operations abroad should establish their own planning offices to lead the development of agency plans and participate in the interagency planning process.
- For each operation, the President should designate one senior official to be in charge of and accountable for integrating U.S. interagency operations on the ground. Congress should establish a new Agency for Stability Operations that is charged with assessing and preparing for stability operations that would report directly to the Secretary of State.
- Congress should establish a new Agency for Stability Operations, with a Civilian Stability Operations Corps (CSOC) and Reserve, that is charged with: assessing and preparing for stability operations; organizing, training and equipping civilian capabilities for such operations; and rapidly deploying civilian experts to the field.
- Congress should create a new Training Center for Interagency and Coalition Operations.
- The Secretaries of Defense, State, and others should enhance peacetime opportunities for civilian planners and operators to work with their counterparts from various countries. Congress should provide funding for these programs.
- Congress should fund two international training and exercise programs to develop and institutionalize standard operating procedures for the planning and conduct of operations involving U.S. civilian and military personnel and their foreign counterparts.
- Congress should increase U.S. funding for programs that support building the operational capabilities of allies and partners in priority task areas in complex operations.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Murdock, 63-67.

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